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LETTER DATED 18 JUNE 1999 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I am writing the present letter to inform the Security Council of the truth in connection with the recent grave situation created on the Korean peninsula.

Beginning on 4 June, naval warships from the south Korean side infiltrated our territorial waters of the West Sea of Korea daily, thus bringing the situation to the brink of war, while hampering our servicemen in their routine duties.

In particular, the south warships bumped against our patrol boats in a deliberate way and, starting at 0912 hours on 15 June, fired thousands of bullets and shells at our warships to imperil greatly our servicemen's lives and severely damage our patrol boats and thereby perpetrated a blatant provocation.

That incident was a premeditated military provocation committed by the south side with the connivance of the United States which, holding a prerogative of the military command over south Korea, is trying to unleash a new war by keying up tension on the Korean peninsula.

This is clearly evidenced by the fact that such provocation was committed in the situation in which the United States, following its war plan called "Operation Plan 5027-98", is now deploying in reinforcement the latest weapons and equipment in south Korea, such as AC-130 ground attack planes, F-15 and F-18 fighter bombers, unmanned planes and precision guided bombs, and is putting on the alert the United States marines in Okinawa and a tactical plane battalion and electronic warfare planes on the United States mainland. In addition, a number of United States fighter planes and warships moved towards these waters after the armed conflicts.

Furthermore, the United States unilaterally walked out of the General Officer's talks at Panmunjom after having proposed to hold such talks, saying that this issue should be resolved through dialogue. Through this, we can clearly understand that the incident was fabricated deliberately and premeditatedly by the United States.

We cannot help but draw attention to the fact that the ill-boding military movement of the United States is timed to coincide with the crisis of Yugoslavia coming to an end.

The touch-and-go situation is now created in the Korean peninsula where a war may break out any time.

Nevertheless, the United States and the south side are distorting the truth to all intents and purposes as if our side is to blame for this incident, while blaring that our side fired first after coming over into the south Korean waters in violation of the Armistice Agreement.

But, they cannot cover up the truth of this incident on all accounts.

According to the 1953 Armistice Agreement (para. 13 (b)), the "allied forces" envisaged controlling only five islands, Paengyong-Do, Taechong-Do, Sochong-Do, Yonpyong-Do and U-Do, lying in our territorial waters. And the water areas of the above islands are where our sovereignty is being exercised lock, stock and barrel.

As regards the "northern boundary line", the United States and the south side unilaterally established it in our water zone against the Armistice Agreement. We have not yet recognized it, nor waived even for a while our sovereignty over that area.

Accordingly, what the United States and the south side argued about the "northern boundary line" is a flagrant encroachment upon the sovereignty of our territorial waters.

There is no justification at all for this.

This notwithstanding, the south side is bustling about "imploring" something in its favour to justify its act of aggression against us.

The prevention of this armed conflict from developing into an all-out war is entirely attributable to our great patience and self-control.

If the danger of war is to be averted and durable peace secured in the Korean peninsula, it is indispensable for the United States to renounce its hostile policy against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and to put an early end to its dangerous provocations of a new war.

We wish the Security Council to understand clearly the truth about this incident and take measures to end at once the military provocations on the part of the United States and the south side.

I would be grateful if you could have the present letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) LI Hyong Chol
Ambassador
Permanent Representative